

FISCAL MEMORANDUM

HB 351 – SB 509

May 16, 2007

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENT (008475, 008541, 006078): Deletes provisions allowing for a parent to file a petition to gain custody of a child within a four month period to show that there is not intent to abandon his or her child. Such petition would supersede any failure on the part of the parent to support or visit the child. Requires an evidentiary hearing to determine a person has not willfully failed to support or visit his or her child if such person was thwarted by the acts of others and by circumstances beyond his or her control.

FISCAL IMPACT OF ORIGINAL BILL:

Increase State Expenditures - \$1,300,200

Other Fiscal Impact – Increase Federal Expenditures - \$721,300

FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

Increase State Expenditures – Not Significant

Increase Local Govt. Expenditures – Not Significant

Other Fiscal Impact – Increase Federal Expenditures – Not Significant

Assumptions applied to amendment:

- The original bill authorized a parent to file a petition which would delay the Department of Children's Services (DCS) ability to terminate parental rights, thus increasing the amount of time in which a child remained in state custody.
- The bill as amended deletes this provision and portrays the current procedures that DCS follows in the termination of parental rights. Such will not result in a significant increase in state or federal expenditures.
- There will not be a significant increase in the caseloads of the court systems. Any increase will be absorbed within existing state and local resources.

CERTIFICATION:

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" and last name "White" clearly legible, and "W." in the middle.

James W. White, Executive Director

/kml